

Espionage Activities

968. SHRI SURESH PRABHU :
SHRI G.A. CHARAN REDDY :

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is recently a spurt in the espionage activities by some new recruits in the intelligence wing of the Border Security Force for Pakistan intelligence agencies in the Jaisalmer region of the Rajasthan border;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps being taken to strengthen our counter-espionage service so as to have a check on such type of anti-national activities?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MOHD. MAQBOOL DAR) : (a) and (b) There is no spurt of espionage activities by BSF personnel. However, one Constable of BSF posted in Jaisalmer was apprehended on April 6, 1997 by Rajasthan police as his name figured during interrogation of suspects. The case is under investigation.

(c) All possible steps are being taken to combat and frustrate the designs of anti-national elements by sensitising and gearing-up the intelligence machinery, sharing of intelligence and by co-ordinated action by all concerned Central and State Agencies.

[*Translation*]

Uttarakhand State

969. SHRIMATI BHAVNABEN DEVRAJ BHAI
CHIKHALIA :
SHRIMATI PURNIMA VERMA :
SHRI AJAY CHAKRABORTY :
SHRIMATI SHEELA GAUTAM :
SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE :
SHRI RAMESHWAR PATIDAR :

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government have studied the proposal sent by Government of Uttar Pradesh regarding creation of a separate Uttarakhand State;

(b) if so, the view of the Union Government thereto;

(c) whether there is any proposal to call a meeting of elected representatives to discuss this matter;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the time by which a decision is likely to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MOHD. MAQBOOL DAR) : (a) to (e) Yes, Sir. The Central Government has decided in favour of the establishment of a separate State of Uttarakhand comprising the nine hill districts of the Revenue Divisions of Kumaon and Garhwal of the State of Uttar Pradesh. The Bill in this regard will be referred to the Legislature of that State for expressing its views thereon. Keeping in view the legal and administrative complexities involved in the issue, it would not be possible to lay down a definite time frame in the matter.

Crops Damaged by Pollution

970. SHRI RAJKESHAR SINGH :
SHRI PANKAJ CHOWDHARY :
CHAUDHARY RAMCHANDRA BENDA :

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether air pollution in India is posing danger not only to the human life but it has affected some crops as well due to which the production of these crops has declined up to 40 per cent;

(b) if so, the crops affected by air pollution as per the research conducted in this regard; and

(c) the steps being taken by the Government in giving due attention to this issue?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ) : (a) and (b) Air pollution may cause adverse impacts on human health and plants. Studies carried out on effect of air pollution on plants have indicated that the productivity and yield of certain crops located around the pollution sources are affected. However, no conclusive data on the extent of damage caused to the crops is available. Some of the crops affected by air pollution include wheat, soyabean, maize, rice etc.

(c) The steps taken by the Government include the following:—

1. Standards for brick kilns have been prescribed for particulate emissions and for stack height.
2. Ambient air quality standards have been notified. A network of ambient air quality monitoring stations has been set up.